

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ANTIDOTE.

The "*Antidote*" complains bitterly that they have written "five essays" (and now a sixth) without making a convert of the editor of the *Correspondent*. If the five essays, which I have not seen, resemble the sixth, which I have seen, it required no prophetic spirit to predict such a result from such a mass of cant and sophistry.

It is a melancholy truth that nothing but priestcraft has prevented, or ever will prevent, man from arriving at the knowledge of the laws of Nature; and awful indeed must be the lot of every man who cannot find his God without the aid of a mercenary priest. For all priests are mercenary; and, if you drop a hundred dollars additional salary into a bag, and shake it before a priest, you may lead him from one village or town to another, in the same manner as the Swiss "loch" their favorite cows from one district to another.

"But," says the *Antidote*, "what Christian priest or clergyman ever inculcated cruelty and savage barbarity of any kind?" We answer, every "Christian priest or clergyman" from the year when Ananias and Sapphira were slain, down to the introduction of philosophy and the art of printing, about 300 years ago! So that for about 1500 years the Christian priests did nothing but bury the people, as well as themselves, in the vilest ignorance, and "inculcate cruelty and savage barbarity of" every "kind," not only against their national enemies, as the "Arabs" do, but against millions of their own Christian brethren! Persecution has never failed to exist in every priesthood in Christendom. The protestants abandoned their mother church on account of persecution unto death of millions by that church; but no sooner did the protestants become sufficiently *powerful* to reek their vengeance on helpless victims, than their clergy imitated the burnings and tortures of the mother church, and finally drove hundreds and thousands of their victims to America for shelter and liberty of conscience.

But it would seem as if all the devils described in the New Testament had turned priests; for no sooner had these friends of "liberty of conscience" acquired sufficient power than they also commenced a similar persecution against every man, woman, and child who entertained any doubts of their infallibility on all matters of conscience, and either banished them or punished them with death. How long is it since your priests abandoned witchcraft as a fable? and how many innocent mortals were executed by them under the silly accusation of witchcraft? Where was the evidence of your benevolent God and benevolent religion to be

found at that time? The existence of witchcraft is fully proved by your Bible in the case of the witch of Endor; and yet, where is the priest who dares now say publicly that witches ever existed? The record of this impossibility for a fact is of itself sufficient to blast the credit of every other word of your Bible. Remember! the more you stir in the quagmires thereof the deeper you will sink into them! Such was the boasted influence of Christianity on the morals of the various nations who professed it, that nothing but wars and murders for conscience sake could satisfy their insatiable appetite for blood! And yet the clergy of the *Antidote* have the impudence to inquire whether any "Christian priest or clergyman ever inculcated cruelty or savage barbarity of any kind?" Is then the blow of the "Arab" greater "cruelty" than the burning faggots and hangings of the Christian priests?

Again: "And will even Mr. Shultz,* with all his deep rooted prejudices against Christianity, believe for a moment that if the Arabs were enlightened by the gospel, and their hearts impressed with its benevolent precepts, they would treat their captives as they now do?" There is not a single benevolent precept in your Bible but what was taught by Brahma more than 3000 years before Christ was born! And no doubt the Arabs must have heard of them from India hundreds of years before Christ did. If the Jews had the first offer of your "gospel," and kicked it into the fire, it is very probable that the Arabs had the second offer or perusal of that gospel, and decided on its merits nearly 2000 years before the clergy of the *Antidote* had any opportunity of seeing the same work.

Virtue and vice had been discussed and defined thousands of years before Moses; nay, all the theology as well as morality found in your Bible were first taught by Brahma for ages before. It is not true, as the *Antidote* asserts, that "Christianity has expelled the most revolting principles and practices of the feudal system," for they remain still, a monument of disgrace to a great part of Europe: nor has it "extended commerce, civilization, and freedom," nor "softened the horrors of war," nor "the rigors of feudal codes," nor "advanced in all quarters the cause of literature and science." Nor has it "raised us to the pinnacle of national prosperity and glory;" for it is to philosophy and printing alone that we can truly ascribe the enjoyment of all these blessings; and, until they made their appearance, about 300 years ago, Christianity remained, what it always has been, a wretched system, producing nothing but wars, misery, and woe to all the Christian world.

There are many Christian nations and states who, notwithstanding they are Christians now, and ever have been since their conversion, yet still remain in nearly as wretched a state as ever, because their masters and rulers have always opposed the introduction of philosophy and science among them. Need we refer you to the myriads of Russia, of Austria, and catholic Germany; to the hosts of Italy, Naples, and Portugal, or to those of Spain in Europe, as well as those in her late dominions in South America? There you find the full "influence of Christianity," unaided by the powerful lights of philosophy; and what a deplorable picture of their moral state, as well as of their happiness, do they present!

*All "Mr. Shultz's deep rooted prejudices" were in favor of and not against Christianity, until he divested himself of all prejudices whatever.

If your Christ was a God, was he not omnipotent as well as omniscient? and if so, why did he not discover the best mode of circulating and establishing his doctrines throughout the world, by means of the art of printing?

C. SCHULTZ.

WHAT IS BLASPHEMY?

Mr. Editor—To speak *blasphemously*, as far as I am able to understand that expression, can only signify, to speak dishonorably of God: to speak in derogation of his divine nature and attributes. Now, since both reason and scripture teach us, that the only true God is *immutable, incorporeal, and omnipresent*, should any doctrine assert, that the divine nature hath undergone a change, and assumed a *corporeal* form, which must be local, I think there can be no doubt but such doctrine would be highly injurious to the Deity, and derogatory from his most essential attributes as well as most pernicious in its consequences. For this reason, when the Israelites at Mount Horeb, meaning to worship the true God, erected the golden calf, as a fit emblem of the object of their religious adoration, it will not, I presume, be denied, that they were guilty of *the most blasphemous idolatry*; and, when exulting in the restoration of that mode of religious worship, in behalf of which they had acquired an habitual prejudice in the land of Egypt, they loudly proclaimed that four footed image to be a just representation of the Almighty Being whose interposition had so lately delivered them from their Egyptian bondage; whether we judge their conduct by the dictates of reason, or by the law of Moses, they were, most certainly, guilty of *speaking blasphemously against God*. Let us suppose, then, for a moment, that the means of forming the molten image had failed them, but that they had asserted, that the God *who brought them up out of the land of Egypt* had previously taken the *bovine nature* upon him in the belly of a cow, been made an ox, and had appeared in Egypt, and, though then in heaven, still continued incarnate in the body of that animal; and that, even without the use of any visible symbol, they had instituted a form of divine worship, adapted to the name and properties of the fabulous god Apis. Surely, in this case, both the worship and the language of the Israelites would have been, at least, equally *blasphemous*, as in the other.

There may be some, perhaps, who will readily allow the charge of *blasphemy* in so monstrous and disgusting an instance as is here supposed, but who do not think it equally, nor even in any degree, blasphemous against Almighty God to teach, that, in another place and period, he became incarnate in the body of an animal of a more excellent nature and superior rank. But, certainly, whatever difference there may be in the nature of finite beings, when compared with each other, there is absolutely none at all, when we consider them with respect to the infinite and eternal creator of the universe; and, consequently, both the *blasphemy* of the expression, and the impossibility of the fact, must be exactly the same, whether we affirm the Almighty to be incarnate, by having been made one of the *lowest* or one of the *highest* order of those creatures, which his own power and goodness hath called into existence.

Lest, however, I should appear to speak rashly, and to revile long established opinions without sufficient grounds, I beg you to consider, that

the Deity is, in his very nature, omnipresent; that his becoming incarnate, in a particular body, evidently implies his being more immediately present with that body than with any other: whereas, the very meaning of omnipresence is, that he is equally present, equally close connected, as far as such a being can properly be said to be connected, with all the bodies in the universe. You will be pleased to recollect, likewise, that God is *immutable*, another attribute absolutely inconsistent with his *incarnation*. To evince this, let us only attend to the commonly received opinions of man, as a being compounded of two natures, the one spiritual, the other carnal. Allowing this idea to be just, and that, at the dissolution of this composition by death, man exists simply in a spiritual state, it is certain that the alteration made by death in the mode of his existence is the greatest change such a compound being can undergo. It is evident, therefore, that were a purely spiritual being, such as the soul of man is usually presumed to be, when separated from the body, to become compounded with a carnal nature like our own, he would suffer a change exactly equivalent to that which man is said to suffer at his death. And, since the difference between the nature of God and that of the most perfect created being is infinitely great, to assert that he who hath existed from eternity in a spiritual, incorporeal, uncompounded state, hath at length adopted another mode of existence, and is become compounded with a material, animal body, is to assert, that the only unchangeable being in the universe hath undergone a change infinitely greater than any of his own mutable creatures can undergo.

B.

 RIGHTS OF WOMEN.

Mr. Editor—One method of advancing the Christian religion, and of retarding the progress of truth, has been the subject of very little remark, although of great importance in its consequences: it is the unjust and impudent ascendancy which the priests and professors of religion maintain over the female mind, and the unprincipled methods by which they endeavor to perpetuate that ascendancy. Does a man break through the fetters of superstition imposed on him by a mistaken system of education, it is ten to one that he places himself in opposition to the opinion of one or more of the other sex, in the shape of a mother, wife, or aunt, who, instigated by *pious* pastors or their *pious* professing followers, declare interminable war against him, unless he renounces opinions produced by reflection, examination, and evidence—in other words, becomes a hypocrite, and professes what he cannot believe, or conceals what he does believe, although he conceives the inculcation of his belief would greatly benefit his fellow beings. The man placed in this situation has only the painful alternatives of sinning unpardonably against his conscience, or of severing bonds of affection which perhaps form his principal prospects of happiness and enjoyment.

The influence of the softer sex over the other is well known; and, in order to convert this influence to their own use, it has ever been the object of the priesthood to inculcate the doctrine that the female mind is not susceptible of that degree of refinement and cultivation which is accessible to the mind of man, and to withhold from them, on this pretence, the

same means and opportunities of instruction which are generally offered to the latter sex. This doctrine has been preached and acted upon for ages; and, until it is eradicated, and woman restored to her proper rank in society, the temple of truth must rest on an insecure foundation. While such illiberal and partial distinctions are made in the education of the two sexes, it is not to be wondered at that females are the most liable to receive and adopt the pernicious doctrines and precepts of a scheming priesthood, and to become, in reality, their tools. We, however, have reason to rejoice that this strong prop of priestly influence is beginning to be undermined; that a few intrepid heroines have set the example (in spite of excommunication and anathemas) of throwing off the burthen of superstition which their sex has too long labored under, and that the example is approved and imitated. We allude to those ladies who have boldly ventured to attend the meetings of the New York Free Press Association; a step which will no doubt subject them to the abuse and curses of all whose trade is *religion*, and their fanatical followers.

But, in this city at least, superstition and priestcraft have received their death blow: Christianity is beginning to be viewed in its proper light; and many already perceive, that if half the money which is expended to propagate its pernicious tenets was appropriated to the exposure of their baneful tendency, less vice and misery would exist, and morality, fostered and cherished by the *Religion of Nature*, would proportionably increase.



PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

Mr. Editor—During the early progress of Christianity, in the Roman empire, a principal benefit arising from the study of the Grecian philosophy was its tendency among the enlightened classes to discredit the popular divinities, the multiplicity of which had well nigh tired the credulity of the less informed. In Cicero's time, a kind of vague deism, or the pure mechanism of Epicurus, was the common doctrine of the learned; yet, then, certain philosophers had busied themselves in forming systems on the idea of interposing genii, with rites and religious discipline to render them worthy of approaching these superior essences; and it was in the dialogues of Plato they sought the principles of this doctrine. The oppressed and unfortunate of the conquered nations, of weak but sanguine imaginations, attached themselves to the new religion, because the interests of the ruling priests dictated to them an equality in their slavery, and a patient endurance of exactions, toils, and privations, with a renunciation of wealth, honors, and pleasures, to be compensated in a future life of interminable felicity. Some of these, however, felt the necessity of relieving, by metaphysical subtilties, their gross mythology; and to this end they also had recourse to the dialogues of Plato, though they afterward acquired a preference for the doctrines of Aristotle.

Many Egyptian, Jewish, and oriental sects, at once, attacked the old religion of the empire; but, with equal bitterness contending among themselves, they were gradually lost in the religion of Jesus; and from their wreck was collected and fabricated a history, a ritual, and creed, to which most of these fanatics united themselves. Christians then be-

came a powerful party, which mingled in the quarrels of the Cæsars, placed Constantine on the throne, and subsequently seated itself there also, beside his weak succession. It had then to avenge itself of the outrages of philosophy: it feared the spirit of investigation and doubt, and that confidence of man in his own reason and energies, the pest alike of all religious creeds. Thus prepared, its devotees blindly swallowed its sacred dogmas, fictions, and self contradictions; and, armed with the bloody zeal of intolerance, its triumph was a main cause of the extinction of both reason and science.

Hudson, Nov. 10, 1827.

CONDORCET.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1827.

TO OUR PATRONS.

As the second volume, which will complete the first year of the *Correspondent*, is drawing to a close, we think it necessary to call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication, namely: that those residing in the country should pay one year (\$3) *in advance*, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months *in advance*. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several instances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it *vital* support; and, as we have neither ecclesiastical treasures nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if *city* subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year *at our office*, it would save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bolingbroke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE NINTH.

The story in the 7th chapter of Genesis, about the whole earth having been once overflowed with water, is one of the most ridiculous legends that ever was palmed on the credulity of man. Even the leading personage in the tale is the child of fable and of fiction; and, notwithstanding the many elaborate volumes that have been written to give him personal identity, I have not been able to discover any thing that tends to render this obscure subject less obscure, or to reconcile it with reason and probability.

The name *Noah*, which the writer of Genesis tells us was that of the individual whom God saved from destruction, when he drowned the world, signifies, in our language, a *boat*. It is a word which was used by the Phenicians as well as by the Hebrews; and, although both of these nations attached several meanings to it, all of them were applicable to a boat; as rest, repose, to quaver, and to totter. *No* is also synonymous with *habitation*; as in the ancient name of Thebes, which was Ammon-*no*, the habitation of Ammon. In Lower Egypt, during the three months of the year when the country was under water, the people lived in boats, and did no work. It was then the time of rest, and the *no*, or *boat*, was a symbol of repose. In Chaldea and Hindostan, also, the inhabitants of the plains had recourse to the aid of *flotillas*, during the season of rain. Here, as well as in Egypt, lived the *Noachida*, or *children of the boat*; the fragments of whose history the Jews evidently blended with their own. Hence would very naturally arise the idea that these were the children of *Noach*, as if Noah had been a man or a woman. People who live in poverty are called the children of *distress*, but we never suppose that distress is either a man or a woman.

One writer asserts that *Menu* was *Noah*. Now there never was such a person as Menu. It was a symbol of laws and regulations, and is the *Manoah* of the Jews, which means to regulate, or to cast up; that is, to reckon. It is varied in pronunciation, and is sometimes called *Menu*, *Manas*, and *Monah*; from which is derived the English *Moon*, the regulator of time. The same writer says that *Nau*, a Greek word which signifies a ship, was Noah; but whether Noah be a boat or a ship, is alike fatal to his existence as a man. In another place, he informs his readers that *Hippomanes* is Noah. This still destroys the existence of Noah as an identical man; though it will establish the mythological origin of the being so called; for Hippomanes, according to Ovid, was *admiral of the navy of the island of Atalanta*, and traced his pedigree but four removes from *Neptune, king of the waters*. We have already seen how the word *Moses*, or *Mises*, which signifies *saved from the waters*, came to be considered a real personage. Here we have a similar mistake, which is traced to ancient memorials, by which it is established that the inhabitants of the level countries were under the necessity of living in boats a considerable part of the year, to escape the annual inundations.

The account which Berosus gives of a deluge by which a vast multitude of people were destroyed, and which, according to Josephus, this Chaldean historian ascertained by the most ancient writings, so closely resembles that given in Genesis, that it is next to impossible to doubt the writer of the latter had the former before him when he compiled his history. Berosus not only speaks of the great influx of waters, and of the destruction of men, in nearly the same words, but he mentions the ark, in which *Nochus*, as he calls him, was saved. Abydenus, another very ancient writer, as mentioned by Eusebius, gives the following account of what the Egyptians believed respecting the deluge: "*Sisithrus* (i. e. Noah) having been informed by *Saturn* that there would be a great flood of waters on the 15th day of the month Desins, commanded him to hide all writings in Heliopolis of the Syriacs. When he had performed this, *Sisithrus* immediately sailed to Armenia, where what God had predicted to him came to pass. The third day after the waters ceased, he sent forth birds that he might try whether they could find any land not covered with water. But they finding nothing but sea, returned back to *Sisithrus*. In like manner, after some days, he sent out others, with similar success. But when the birds were sent out the third time, they returned with their feet covered with mud. Then the gods caught up *Sisithrus* among men; but the ship remained in Armenia, and the wood of it afforded the inhabitants amulets to chase away many diseases." Berosus also says, that in his time it was reported there was some part of this vessel remaining at the mountain of the Gordyæans, and that many scraped off the bitumen for medicinal purposes.

According to Ovid, the earth was once inundated by water, which destroyed all mankind except *Ducalion* and *Pyrra*. Nonnus affirms, that the earth was *three times* entirely destroyed by water, and that the flood mounted to heaven, and added by its foam to the whiteness of the Milky Way. Thus we perceive, without any stretch of fancy or conjecture, that the ancients always connected the remarkable occurrences in Nature with the constellations, or other appearances in the heavens. In the Bible, we have the opening of the windows of heaven to let the water descend which was to drown the earth, and their shutting again after its destruction was completed. Here, we have the flood mounting to heaven, and adding by its foam to the whiteness of the Milky Way. Both accounts are decidedly emblematical—a mode of instruction peculiar to all the orientals, and which was readily followed by the Jews when they began to study the history of these ancient nations; whose chronologies, however, they mutilated, and changed the character of their writings, in order to give countenance to their unfounded and arrogant pretensions, that they were the stock whence all the nations of the earth sprung.

We learn from the accounts of the Jesuits who travelled in India, about the beginning of the last century, that the people of that country also believed in a deluge. They say that "the god *Routren*, the great destroyer, resolved one day to drown all mankind, pretending that he had just cause to be displeased with them. His design could not be so secret but that *Vichnou*, the preserver, was sensible of it. He discovered the very day on which the deluge was to happen. His power did not extend so far as to stop the execution of *Routren*'s design; but his qualifi-

cation of god, the preserver of all things, empowered him to prevent, if possible, the most pernicious effects; and thus he went about it: he appeared one day to Sattivarti, his great confidant, and warned him that he had nothing to fear for himself, and that, in despite of Routren, he would find means to save him, and to manage it so as the world should be peopled again. His design was to produce a wonderful barque at the time when Routren least thought of it, and to shut up in it a good stock of at least eight hundred and forty millions of souls and seeds of beings. It was also requisite that Sattivarti, at the time of the deluge, should be on a very high mountain, which he must take special care to make known to him. Some time after, as had been foretold, Sattivarti perceived an infinite number of clouds gathering. He observed without any alarm the storm threatening over the heads of guilty mortals. The most dreadful rain that ever had been seen fell from heaven; the rivers swelled, and spread themselves with the utmost rapidity over the face of the earth; the sea broke beyond its bounds, and, mixing with the overflowing rivers, in a short time covered the highest mountains. Trees, beasts, men, cities, and kingdoms were all drowned. All animated beings perished.

"In the mean time, Sattivarti, with some of his penitents, had withdrawn himself to his mountain. There he expected the relief promised him by the god; nor was he without some moments of dread. The water, which continually grew more powerful, and insensibly drew near his retreat, every now and then caused him considerable alarm; but at the very moment he gave himself up for lost, he saw the barque appear which was to save him. He entered it immediately with his devout followers. The eight hundred and forty millions of souls and seeds of beings were shut up there before him. The difficulty consisted in steering the barque, and keeping it up against the waves, which were then furiously agitated. The god Vichnou took care to provide for this. He immediately converted himself into a fish, and used his tail as a rudder to steer the vessel. The god, who was at the same time fish and pilot, managed so dexterously, that Sattivarti waited at his ease for the water to run off from the earth."

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—The members of this Association are reminded, that the regular monthly meeting takes place, in the Temple of Arts, William street, on Sunday the 1st of December next, at 10 o'clock forenoon. As business of importance will come before the meeting, a full attendance is requested.

The Sunday morning lecture is now delivered in the Central Academy, rear of No. 18 Hammersly street, (being a continuation of Houston street,) at half past 10 o'clock.

* * Arrangements are now making to introduce a regular course of *scientific* lectures (in connection with the theological lectures) at the meetings of the Association. Due notice will be given when the first of these lectures will be delivered.

Almanac.—The Editor of the *Correspondent* is now preparing for the press an *Almanac* modelled on rational principles, and entirely divested

of those puerilities and absurdities which characterize every work of that description now in circulation. It will contain all useful and necessary calculations, and such other matters as may have a tendency to enlarge, not to paralyze, the human mind. The retail price will be 6 1-4 cents; but to those who take 25 copies for distribution, a discount of 25 per cent. will be given. Such as are disposed to encourage this undertaking are requested to give notice as soon as possible of the number of copies they may require, as it is intended to put this work to press early in December. Any communication calculated to render this Almanac useful or interesting, may be left at No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Death of a Liberal.—Lord Seldon was a liberal—he was dying—his physicians doubted if he could live throughout the ensuing week; and his lady, who had been brought up in the strictest tenets of the Christian religion, feared he would die an unbeliever. Was there any hope she could now effect that, which for the space of eighteen years had been the aim of her life? Daily had she urged the topic, and was always answered by her husband with exquisite good humor. She felt the delusive hope, that the morrow would prove more propitious than today. Once, and once only, when she urged him beyond his strength, having exhausted all her eloquence in favor of Christianity, and finding him still regardless, she could no longer restrain her anger, but with clasped hands and raised eyes, she exclaimed aloud, “behold, oh, Lord, the worm that dare deny thy existence and authority!”—then, bending her eyes on her husband with a look of desperation, she continued,—“and I had fixed my heart on a confirmed atheist—a man on whom the breath of heaven should not wander.” Lord Seldon was now evidently displeased. “Emily,” said he, “when I see that religion whose merits you are always asserting cannot even teach you to command your temper, you will not blame my humility, when I fear its salutary effects might be equally lost upon myself.” He then hastily left the room, and his countess internally vowed never more to name religion in his presence. Lady Seldon, however, descanted daily, nay hourly, in glowing colors, on the horrors of atheism, and the certain fate that awaited it; perhaps an undefined hope that she might reach the father’s heart through the medium of his children mingled itself with her exertions; but surely she was mistaken in the means she took to obtain this end.

A great change had lately taken place in lord Seldon; an hereditary malady was fast destroying the seeds of life—his wife now thought it her duty to renew every endeavor for his conversion; for once she appealed eloquently, for she appealed to the heart—she descanted long on the immeasurable power of the almighty—she told him that even yet it was not too late. “Repent—believe—and have you faith,” said she, her heart upon her lips, as she turned to the dying sufferer. “If there be a God said he, “good works will be more acceptable in his eyes than blind faith, pronounced on the threshold of existence; and those benefits,

my station, my own wishes, have enabled me to confer upon others, will be my propitiation with the eternal." "If," murmured his wife—but he had sunk from excessive debility on his pillow, and was totally unequal to further conversation. Lady Seldon left his apartment to indulge her sorrow freely. After this unsatisfactory attempt she sunk into agitated slumber, from which she awoke unrefreshed, but with renewed composure; she then descended to the drawing room, where her children were weeping for their father. "Dry your tears Laura—George, I am ashamed of this weakness. When you ought both of you, to rouse all your energies to save your father's soul from eternal punishment, you are mourning over his bodily ailments. Come with me, and save him or take warning by beholding the death bed of an atheist." George put his hands to his forehead; his body was convulsed; Laura threw her arms around him. "Dear brother," whispered she, "if he should die unbelieving, our prayers and his virtues will secure him an asylum in heaven."

Lady Seldon led the way to his apartment—they stepped so softly that the dying man did not hear them. A sad change had taken place in his appearance within the last few hours—his dissolution was rapidly approaching—one damp cold hand supported his head above the pillow, the other hung listlessly by the side of his couch. It was a warm autumnal evening—the sun was sinking in unclouded glory, amid burnished clouds, below the horizon—the soft south breeze, that played gently through the open window, waved the clustering curls of his dark brown hair, darker from being contrasted with the livid paleness of his cheek; he had not observed the entrance of his family, and thinking aloud—"Spirit of Nature," said he, "how divine are thy works, how delightful their effects bear me gently into futurity—I have not sought to develope thy mystery—I have only worshipped thee in the bright sun—in the soft moon—in the green fields—in human nature—in my friends—in my wife—in my children! Art thou satisfied with such worship—the worship of the heart?" "Oh—no—no—he is not—he cannot be: what do you mean by the spirit of nature?" interrupted his wife. "That which produced this world and myriads of others; that which produced thee, my sweet Emily, and my beloved children." "My dear father" cried Laura, her countenance brightening with renewed hope, "we shall meet again in heaven;" he pressed her to his bosom, and with a voice rendered almost inarticulate by emotion, said, "I hope so, if there be a heaven, I am sure so—and now my sweet children, to you I will confess what human pride would still urge me to conceal, that I would give up all, even this last hour of your endearments, to purchase a thorough conviction that we should meet again—I go without fear, but I go cheerlessly; I would purchase the hope that brightens your brow, my Laura," continued he, as he convulsively prest her fingers. "I am without fear," repeated he, "but without hope," and relaxing the grasp by which he held his daughter's hand, he sank upon his pillow.

The sun had scarcely sunk below the horizon—the attendant clouds, still in gorgeous splendor, lingered to tint with varied beauty the western heaven; the same delicious air still played around his forehead—he had spoken but an instant before, and he will never speak again: he will

wake no more to rejoicing—he will no more watch for and hail the returning spring, the eternal reproduction of Nature—no---that form of manly beauty will shortly be food for worms—the fire of that eye is fled, that often would persuade before his tongue gave birth to eloquence—how soon will all recollection of him be banished from the earth—he who apparently was the centre of a little world, dealing sunshine or discontent, as he directed or denied his approving glance. It is singular to consider that a unit taken from the sum of human beings makes no alteration in the general law; and that the broken hearts of his nearest and dearest connections go for nothing in the scale of general happiness.

Abuse of "Holy Religion."—The archbishop of Cashel, in Ireland, declared in a late debate, that *popery* was a religion fit only for *fools or knaves!* This was rather *illiberal* of the Irish pontiff, and *ungrateful* too, considering the *great additions and improvements* Christianity has received, under the auspices of the popes. We should expect better policy from the protestant priesthood, than to cry down any *branch* of holy religion, at a time the liberals are laying the *axe to the root*. Popery, to be sure, may adopt some *few* silly things, and superstitious notions, which the archbishop despises and rejects; but he ought to consider, that he and his brother Pius, are agreed in *fundamentals*, and that one is as *good a polytheist* as the other. The pope believes in *three gods* as well as he; and if the one be an *idolator*, so is the other.

The Frenchman, who called Christianity the *religion of asses*, was still more illiberal than the archbishop, if he meant to say, that all those, who believe Athanasius's Creed, are *asses*. For we know that some of the ablest men living are of this creed, and *live well by it too*. In justice, however, to the French author, we must suppose that he alluded to the *many asses* that have *figured* in the Old and New Testament. In the former, we have a *loud and braying miracle*, out of the mouth of *Balaam's ass*, who is justly *ranked* among the *Jewish prophets*; and had we no other proof of divine revelation than this, it would be *sufficient* to fix our belief, and make us say *amen* to every thing told us by the ministers of the altar.

In the new dispensation, we find an ass, or the *colt of an ass*, make a distinguished figure and enter triumphantly, mounted by God, into Jerusalem. It is no wonder, then, that this *humble animal* should receive *honors next to divine* in the Christian church, and be spoken of *reverently* by *pious persons*. However decided our antipathy may be to superstition, we are not at all pleased to hear *Jewish or Christian asses laughed at or ridiculed*; for such *impious scoffing* tends greatly to *lessen* the people's *respect*, for their *priests* and their *holy religion*.

Newspapers.—A late Eastern paper gives the number of subscribers to the *Christian Advocate*, a Journal printed in New York for the methodist church, at 15,000. There is another paper in that city belonging to the presbyterians, having, it is said, about the same number. There is also one at Boston; and many smaller ones scattered throughout the Union. Here is a patronage not much surpassed, if equalled, by that

given to any publications on the globe; and for what purpose? To spread useful science? To teach man the arts? his political duties? love and fellowship to his brother?—No!—the very reverse of all this is the object of these millions of sheets; it is to make man a bigot; a fanatic; a slave to priests; a persecutor, or a hypocrite—to close his eyes upon the real beauties and sublime truths of Nature, and to make him contemplate error and falsehood in their stead. What a shameful perversion of the boasted liberty of the press! Have editors *who advocate the great principles of human liberty* reflected on the subject? A religious newspaper is, or is not, opposed to them. If not, they are the best channels of political and useful information, and ought to supersede and do away with all other newspapers. If opposed to a faithful discussion of our rights, then they are dangerous and useless; and as far as a unanimous appeal by all *honest republican editors* to reason and good sense can accomplish the object, they ought to be exposed. A moment's observation will convince the unprejudiced, that if our money and time is to be devoted to the follies, quarrels, falsehoods, and fanaticism of religious sects, there is at once an end of nations and free government. These newspapers have no other object or tendency.—*Western Tiller*.

Propagating the Gospel.—The propagation of the gospel among the Livonians was attended with horrible scenes of cruelty and bloodshed. The first missionary who attempted the conversion of that savage people was Mainhard, a regular canon of St. Augustin, in the monastery of Segeberg, who, towards the conclusion of this century (the twelfth) travelled to Livonia with a company of merchants of Bremen, and improved this opportunity of spreading the light of the gospel in that barbarous region of superstition and darkness. The instructions and exhortations of this zealous apostle were little attended to, and produced little or no effect upon that uncivilized nation; whereupon he addressed himself to the Roman pontiff, Urban III., who consecrated him bishop of the Livonians, and, at the same time, declared a *holy war* against that obstinate people. This war, which was at first carried on against the inhabitants of the province of Esthonia, was continued with still greater vigor, and rendered more general, by Berthold, abbot of Lucca, who left his monastery to share the labors and *laurels* of Mainhard, whom he accordingly succeeded in the see of Livonia. The new bishop marched into that province at the head of a *powerful army* which he had raised in Saxony, *preached the gospel sword in hand, and proved its TRUTH by blows, instead of arguments*. Albert, canon of Bremen, became the third bishop of Livonia, and followed with a barbarous enthusiasm the same *military* methods of conversion that had been practised by his predecessor. He entered Livonia, A. D. 1198, with a fresh body of troops drawn out of Saxony, and encamping at Riga, instituted there, by the direction of pope Innocent III., *the military orders of the knights' sword bearers*, who were commissioned to dragoon the Livonians into the profession of Christianity, and oblige them by force of arms to receive the *benefits* of baptism.

New legions were sent from Germany to second the efforts, and add efficacy to the mission, of these booted apostles; and they, in concert

with knights' sword bearers, so cruelly oppressed, slaughtered, and tormented this wretched people, that, exhausted at length, and unable longer to stand firm against the arm of persecution, strengthened still by new accessions of power, they abandoned the statues of their pagan deities, and *substituted* in their *places* the *images* of the *SAINTS*. But while they received the *blessings* of the gospel they were deprived of *all* earthly comforts: for their *lands* and *possessions* were *taken* from them, with the most odious circumstances of cruelty and violence, and the knights and bishops divided the spoil.—*Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. III. pages 5 and 6.

Faith.—Credulity, superstition. An article loudly extolled and vehemently insisted on, in all ages, by *priests* and *kings*. Success has crowned their exertions. Mankind, on every occasion, have *opened a gullet* wide enough to swallow the absurdest paradoxes, the most glaring impossibilities. Only say, that “an army of soldiers was seen last night to pass over the moon,” and you will immediately perceive a vast legion of implicit believers making their comments and remarks on the *phenomenon*, explaining it on the authority of scriptural prophecies. Nothing too preposterous for popular credulity, which has been always fed and cherished by the great leaders in church and state; knowing this, on that basis only their empire depends. Thus have nations by dint of error and superstition, for a vast succession of ages, yielded themselves up to the dominion of royal or priestly authority, which, in most instances, have formed a coalition for the purpose, whereby the community have been plunged into a fathomless abyss of servitude and ignorance, from which patriotism and philosophy have hitherto labored in vain to rescue them. The *faith* inspired by *priestcraft* and *statecraft*, is the prime cause of that misery and tyranny, which, to this hour, continue to rage through the universe. The *scourges of the world* are held out by *priests*, as the *vicegerents of heaven*, and the opinions and consciences of men, till very lately, have been almost entirely directed by *priests*: but as their empire was terribly convulsed by the revolution in France, which served so essentially to enlighten the human understanding, may it soon be totally destroyed, and may wisdom, peace, and philanthropy erect a lasting throne, on the wreck of *faith*, *error*, and *superstition*!—*Pigott*.

Casting out Devils.—A person of quality came to my chamber in the Temple, and told me he had two devils in his head, (I wondered what he meant,) and just at that time, one of them told him to kill me. With that I began to be afraid, and thought he was mad. He said he knew I could cure him, and, therefore entreated me to give him something, for he was resolved he would go to nobody else. I, perceiving what an opinion he had of me, and that it was only melancholy that troubled him, took him in hand, warranted him, if he would follow my directions, to cure him in a short time. I desired him to let me be alone about an hour, and then to come again, which he was very willing to do. In the mean time, I got a card, and wrapped it up handsomely in a piece of taffeta, and put strings to the taffeta; and when he came, gave it to him, to hang about his neck; withal charged him, that he should not disorder himself, neither with eat-

ing nor drinking, but eat very little of supper, and say his prayers duly when he went to bed; and I made no question but he would be well in three or four days. Within that time I went to dinner to his house, and asked him how he did? He said he was much better, but not perfectly well, for, in truth, he had not dealt clearly with me: he had four devils in his head, and he perceived two of them were gone, with that which I had given him, but the other two troubled him still. "Well," said I, "I am glad two of them are gone; I make no doubt to get away the other two likewise." So I gave him another thing to hang about his neck. Three days after he came to me to my chamber, and professed he was as well as he ever was in his life, and did extremely thank me for the care I had taken of him. I, fearing that he might relapse into the like distemper, said that there was none but myself and one physician more in the whole town that could cure the devils in the head, and that was Dr. Harvey, (whom I had prepared,) and wished him, if ever he found himself ill in my absence, to go to him, for he could cure the disease as well as myself. The gentleman lived many years, and was never troubled after.—*Selden.*

Astrology.—The large majority of the Asiatics are so infatuated in favor of judicial astrology, that, according to their phraseology, no circumstance can happen below which is not written above. In every enterprise they consult their astrologers. When two armies have completed every preparation for battle, no consideration can induce the generals to commence the engagement until the sahet be performed; that is, until the propitious moment for attack be ascertained. In like manner, no commanding officer is nominated, no marriages take place, and no journey is undertaken, without consulting these seers. Their advice is considered absolutely necessary, even on the most trifling occasions; as the proposed purchase of a slave, or the first wearing of new clothes. The astrologer is necessarily made acquainted with every transaction, public and private; with every project, common and extraordinary. It happened that the king's principal astrologer fell into the water and was drowned. This melancholy accident caused a great sensation at court, and proved injurious to the reputation of these professors in divination. The man who had thus lost his life always performed the sahet for the king and the omrahs; and the people naturally wondered that an astrologer of such extensive experience, and who had for many years predicted happy incidents for others, should have been incapable of foreseeing the sad catastrophe by which he was himself overwhelmed. It was insinuated that, in Frangistan, where the sciences flourish, professors in theology are considered little better than cheats and jugglers; that it is there much doubted whether the science be founded on good and solid principles, and whether it be not used by designing men as a mean of gaining access to the great, of making them feel their dependance, and their absolute need of these pretended soothsayers.

Origin of Evil.—The epicureans say, Either God can take away from the world pain, wickedness, and misery, and he will not; or, he is willing to do so, but he cannot; or, he is neither able nor willing to do so;

or, he is both able and willing. In the *first* case, he is wanting in the attributes of goodness and benevolence; and he is, moreover, himself the author of all pain, wickedness, and misery. In the *second* case, he forfeits his attribute of omnipotence; and Satan, or the principle of evil, is independent of and superior to him. In the *third* case, he cannot be considered as either a benevolent or a good God. In the *fourth* case, we have a right to put the unanswerable question, Why then do pain, wickedness, and misery exist in the world?

Convent of the Augustines, at Cadiz.—A multitude of weeping Magdalenes, bedizzened in the finest apparel, meet the eye at every turn; and their sorrow touched aspect, besmeared with a sufficiency of oil, give them a most sedatory character; and this, I apprehend, is intended; the agony of their souls is presumed to facilitate a copious *sweat*, and to typify the exudation of mortal sin! It is remarkable, that while they enjoin the votaries of religion in this world to discard the vanities of dress, they heap together upon these exemplars of sanctity, these waxen personifications of good manners, all the gewgaws that female fancy could devise, or the female heart covet. Surely the prayer that is offered up at shrines so decorated, must needs participate in this their most palpable characteristic; and, instead of suggesting to the mind devout sentiments, is more calculated to call up from the innermost recesses of the heart the dormant feelings of worldly vanity.

Sacred.—Exclusively every word which comes out of the mouth of that infallible, though human being, called a priest.—*Pigott.*

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